# Epi Update for Friday, March 28, 2014 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

#### Items for this week's Epi Update include:

- Heartland Virus Disease
- Leprosy Case in Iowa
- National and State HAI Progress Report
- Meeting announcements and training opportunities

#### **Heartland Virus Disease**

As we approach tick season, clinicians are asked to lookout for cases of Heartland virus disease. Heartland virus disease was first identified in 2009 in Missouri. Typical symptoms include fever, leukopenia, and thrombocytopenia. During 2012-2013, six confirmed cases of Heartland virus disease cases were identified; five patients were Missouri residents, and one was a Tennessee resident. Last year, Heartland virus was isolated for the first time from the lone star tick, which has a wide distribution in the United States including in Iowa. No vaccine or medication is available to prevent or treat Heartland virus disease. Because the virus is likely transmitted through infected ticks or other arthropods, prevention steps include:

- Do not walk barelegged in tall grass or woods where ticks may be found.
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and high socks.
- Conduct "tick checks" every two to three hours if spending a lot of time outdoors.
- Use tick repellents containing the ingredients <u>DEET</u> for skin applications. Use Permethrin (on clothing). Always follow the directions on the can.
- Remove any attached ticks immediately.

Healthcare providers should consider Heartland virus testing in patients who develop fever, leukopenia, and thrombocytopenia without a more likely explanation and who have tested negative for *Ehrlichia* and *Anaplasma* infection or have not responded to doxycycline therapy.

For more information on Heartland virus disease, visit <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/heartland/">http://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/heartland/</a>.

#### **Leprosy Case in Iowa**

IDPH recently received a report of an lowa resident with Leprosy (Hansen's disease), which is caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*. This was only the 8<sup>th</sup> case reported in lowa since 2000.

It is not well understood how *M. leprae* spreads from person to person, but close contact is usually required. Approximately 95% of adults are naturally immune to Leprosy. Armadillos in the Southern United States have been shown to carry *M. leprae*, and may even spread the disease to humans in rare cases. The organism is slow-growing, multiplying on average once every 13 days. This can result in long incubation periods ranging from 9 months to 20 years. Symptoms of Leprosy include skin lesions

or growths, often with lack of sensation in these areas. Muscle weakness, paralysis, and other symptoms may also occur. Treatment consists of a combination of antibiotics, usually given for six months to two years. Patients are no longer infectious once antibiotic therapy has begun.

Leprosy is reportable in lowa. Due to the low risk and spread and high levels of immunity, public health action generally consists of follow-up with household contacts to provide physical examinations and education. For more information on Leprosy, visit <a href="http://www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Leprosy">http://www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Leprosy</a>.

#### **National and State HAI Progress Report**

CDC released the annual report on HAI that gives a closer look at healthcare associated infections at the national and state levels. This report shows that progress has been made for some types of infections but more work is needed to improve patient safety. Iowa hospitals have made progress in reducing the risk of infection from central lines and urinary catheters.

For more information on the CDC report visit: <a href="www.cdc.gov/hai/progress-report/index.html">www.cdc.gov/hai/progress-report/index.html</a>

#### Meeting announcements and training opportunities

#### **NIOCCS Training Available**

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Industry & Occupation Computerized Coding System (NIOCCS) is a free, web-based system that translates industry and occupation (I&O) text into standardized I&O codes (<a href="http://wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-nioccs/">http://wwwn.cdc.gov/niosh-nioccs/</a>). A NIOSH trainer is coming to lowa to provide FREE training through a 1.5 day course on May 13 (8:00 AM-4:30 PM) and May 14 (8:00 AM - 12:00 PM). Attendance both days is required and a certificate of completion will be provided. The training will be held at IDPH in the Lucas State Office Building in Des Moines. Space is limited. Attendees are responsible for their own travel and lodging. Contact Kathy Leinenkugel at <a href="mailto:idph\_ohssp@lists.ia.gov">idph\_ohssp@lists.ia.gov</a> or 515-281-4930 to register or for more information.

## 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Iowa Infection Prevention and Control Seminar

May 6-7 at the Cedar Rapids Marriott. Online registration is now available at <a href="http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/UIConferences/meetings.aspx?cnfcode=14-126-01">http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/UIConferences/meetings.aspx?cnfcode=14-126-01</a>

### Have a healthy and happy week!

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